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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KS](#) [IR](#) [UNSC](#) [GM](#) [ENRG](#) [ETTC](#) [JA](#)  
SUBJECT: GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTER STEINMEIER TALKS UNSC  
REFORM, IRAN, ROK, AND EAST ASIAN SECURITY WITH GOJ

OFFICIALS

Classified By: Deputy Political Counselor Carol T. Reynolds for Reasons  
1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (C) Summary. During his February 20-22 visit to Tokyo, German FM Steinmeier and his Japanese interlocutors agreed to continuing working toward UNSC reform within the G4 framework, with Steinmeier acknowledging that U.S. supports is also important. FM Aso stressed the potentially volatile East Asian security environment and urged that the EU maintain its arms embargo on China. On Iran, the two sides agreed to explore ways to cooperate more closely. End Summary.

¶2. (C) German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier had "very good" discussions with Prime Minister Koizumi and Foreign Minister Aso during his February 20-22 visit to Tokyo, according to MOFA Central and Eastern Europe Division Principal Deputy Director Tatusya Machida. Steinmeier also met with Japanese business leaders, Machida told us February 23. During a February 21 courtesy call, PM Koizumi focused on current German politics -- a rather "unlikely theme." Koizumi's main interest was how the rival Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and Social Democratic Party (SDP) would be able to stay together past the next regional elections.

UN Reform

¶3. (C) In UNSC reform, PM Koizumi expressed his hope that Germany and Japan, as two of the G4 partners, would continue to work together toward a proposal that has the support of the United States, Machida reported. Even though the Germans had supported the original proposal that Brazil and India -- the other two G4 members -- had submitted to the General Assembly, FM Steinmeier agreed that gaining the support of 2/3rds of the General Assembly, and the support of the United States is important. His government, he went on, would re-think its strategy. In closing, PM Koizumi asked the German Foreign Minister to extend an invitation for Chancellor Merkel to visit Japan.

¶4. (C) FM Steinmeier continued his discussion on UN reform with Foreign Minister Aso, Machida noted. Both Foreign Ministers agreed to continue to work on UNSC issues within the G4 framework. Steinmeier added that while they do not yet see eye-to-eye on UNSC issues, the two countries are like-minded on broader UN reform initiatives like the Human Rights and Peace Building Commissions.

Iran

15. (C) Iranian Foreign Minister Mottaki's February 27-March 1 visit to Tokyo would be a good opportunity to exchange views on a number of issues, including Iran's nuclear program, FM Aso told Steinmeier, according to Machida. Aso reaffirmed his government's firm opposition to Iran's nuclear program. Germany, Steinmeier replied, also is concerned about Iran under President Ahmadinejad, whom FM Steinmeier believes stifles the dialogue and religious freedom that Iranians enjoyed marginally under former President Khatami. While concerned that the EU3 now has little leverage, the German Foreign Minister stressed that Germany will continue to work with its partners to press Iran to end its nuclear enrichment program. Both foreign ministers agreed to explore ways to cooperate more closely on Iran-related issues, in much the same manner they cooperate in Iraq and Afghanistan, Machida related.

#### East Asian Security; China Arms Embargo

16. (C) FM Aso underscored to his German counterpart that the Cold War has not yet ended in East Asia, Machida stated. North Korea is still ruled by a dictator, he said, and tensions across the Taiwan Strait and other China-related issues make the region potentially volatile. For this reason it is important that the EU not lift its arms embargo on China, Aso stressed. FM Steinmeier responded that the CDU and SPD parties had agreed prior to forming the grand coalition that the German Government would not take its own initiative on this issue, but follow the EU's lead. At present, FM Steinmeier added, there is no EU initiative to lift the arms embargo. In a separate February 23 conversation, German Embassy Political Counselor Martin Ebert told us that Chancellor Merkel's East German background and her personal reaction to the 1989 Tiananmen incident make her wary of the Beijing regime. Even if the EU should lift the embargo, which did not believe would happen in the near term,

Germany would not sell arms to China, because its arms export controls are among the strictest in the world, he asserted. Germany will assume the EU presidency in the January 2007, he noted, and has not intention of lifting the embargo.

#### Japan-ROK Relations

17. (C) Having just come from talks in Seoul, FM Steinmeier inquired about the current state of Japan-ROK relations. In what Machida jokingly characterized as "personal remarks" by FM Aso, the Japanese Foreign Minister said relations between Japan and Korea are the "most friendly they have been in the past six years." FM Aso based his remarks on two observations: First, in the last six years the exchange of visitors between the two countries has increased from 10,000 people per year to 10,000 people per day (sic), he asserted. Second, a large number of young Koreans now enjoy Japanese pop music; and many Japanese people enjoy Korean movies.

#### Japan-Germany Business Cooperation

18. (C) Accompanied by members of the German business community, Steinmeier was pleased that the "German Year in Japan" initiative, which Machida described as a German government initiative to familiarize Japanese audiences with its culture, had gone so well. Since April, 2005, the Germans have held over 1,500 events in Japan. FM Aso, too, expressed hope that the Germany-Japan relationship would continue to strengthen. Both agreed that their two countries face the same challenges in the near future, specifically noting the aging societies, questions about innovation, and structural reform. On structural reform, the Japanese Foreign Minister welcomed the Japan-Germany Center in Berlin, expressing optimism that it would inaugurate a new dialogue on structural reform, and assist business people to that end. SCHIEFFER